

VZCZCXRO5200
OO RUEHROV
DE RUEHDS #3087 2950557
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 220557Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8218
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 003087

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E; AF/RSA: MBITTRICK AND KMOODY; PM/SNA:
PJANZEN; L/PM: MCOFFEE; L/T: LALLDER; AND H: JHAGAN
CJTF-HOA AND USCENTCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KTIA](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [ET](#)

SUBJECT: H.R. 2003 IMPEDES ARTICLE 98 RATIFICATION

¶1. (SBU) Acting MFA Director General for Legal Affairs Ato Minelik Alemu told Charge on October 11 that the unanimous passage of H.R. 2003 (The Ethiopian Democracy and Accountability Act) on October 2 by the U.S. House of Representatives has made it effectively impossible for the Ethiopian Government (GoE) to seek formal ratification of the Article 98 Agreement signed between the U.S. and Ethiopia. Passage of H.R. 2003, Ato Minelik explained, has made it politically impossible for the GoE to table the Agreement before parliament for ratification. If it were submitted for ratification, he speculated, it would be rejected overwhelmingly by the ruling party-majority parliament which sees the House's passage of H.R. 2003 as a slap in the face. Without being presented to parliament for ratification, however, the Agreement remains provisionally in force in Ethiopia as it has since it was originally signed in October ¶2004.

¶2. (SBU) In response to the Charge's emphasis that the United States Government would like final ratification of the Agreement, Ato Minelik confirmed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would explore the possibility of an exchange of notes in which Ethiopia could confirm that the Agreement effectively does have, and will continue to have, the full force of law until the agreement is formally ratified.

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: In a separate meeting, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Tekeda Alemu expressed to Charge and a visiting Senate StaffDel that while still in draft form, the bill was an offense to the GoE and its strong partnership with the United States, the fact that the House of Representatives approved the bill unanimously has caused the GoE to seriously question if Washington takes Ethiopia seriously and the future of our bilateral relations. Ratification of the Article 98 Agreement, therefore, stands as the first confirmed casualty in the U.S.-Ethiopia bilateral relationship stemming from passage of H.R. 2003. If and how the Senate takes up this issue will likely have a direct impact on spurring or impeding other GoE reactions that could take a significant toll on U.S. interests in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. End Comment.
MALAC